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Committees  
Economic Development, Small  
Business and Regulatory Reform VC  
Families and Human Services VC  
Government Operations  
Health Policy

# The Jacobs Report

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**Friday, July 30, 2004**

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## **LEGISLATURE IN SESSION NEXT WEEK**

Few expect that the budget will be resolved when the Legislature returns on Wednesday, but lawmakers in the House and Senate hope that the Legislature will have made final decisions on an increase in the tax assessed on the three Detroit casinos.

Until the casino tax is resolved, the rest of the budget remains in flux. The House version of the tax doubles it to 36 percent; the Senate's plan involves a 6 percentage point hike. It's unclear at this time what sort of compromise might be in the works.

There does seem to be consensus that the casino tax will provide the final revenues for balancing the budget.

The next fiscal year begins October 1.

Both the House and Senate are scheduled to come into session on August 4. The House has also set session for August 5 and 6, while the Senate has scheduled tentative meetings for those days.

A major conflict surrounding racino legislation still exists, and it remains to be seen whether the casino tax increase in HB 4612 can pass the House without passage of HB 4610, which would allow slot machines at horse race tracks. Racino supporters want to send HB 4610 to the governor first. (Please see last week's Jacobs Report for detailed coverage.)

## **AUTO INSURANCE GUIDE AVAILABLE**

No-fault automobile insurance is mandatory in Michigan. Although drivers don't have a choice about buying auto insurance, there are some choices to be made about how much you pay and who you choose as your insurance company. You may have recently experienced an increase in your premium or maybe you just want to check out some other companies but you don't know where to start. Michigan's Office of Financial and Insurance Services (OFIS) can help you by giving you the information you need to understand what affects your premium and giving you some tools to help you shop around for a lower premium or for a different insurance company.

The 2004 Buyer's Guide to Auto Insurance is now available on the OFIS website at

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[www.michigan.gov/ofis](http://www.michigan.gov/ofis). The guide includes potential discounts available to Michigan consumers and different auto insurance company rates.

Hard copies of the guide can be obtained by calling (877) 999-6442.

### **BACKGROUND ON THE EMERALD ASH BORER**

In the summer of 2002, scientists detected a new exotic insect in six southeast Michigan counties: Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne. This pest, known as the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB for short), is an invasive species originally from Asia and previously unknown in North America that attacks ash trees. To date, it has killed or damaged millions of ash trees in these affected areas. It has also been detected in Windsor, Ontario of Canada, and in small, isolated pockets in Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Eaton, Genesee, Ingham, Jackson, Kent, Lenawee, Roscommon, Saginaw, Shiawassee and St. Clair counties. For more information, please visit the Michigan Department of Agriculture Home Page:

<http://www.michigan.gov/mda>.

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/>.

**State Senator Gilda Jacobs** represents the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

**Constituents of the 14<sup>th</sup> District may contact Senator Jacobs at [sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov](mailto:sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov) or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.**

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